University of Zurich[UZH]

IKMZ – Institute of Communication and Media Research

The IKMZ Speaker Series presents:

"The paradox of visibility for activism: Countering the climate crisis between news logics and algorithmic logics."

Prof. Dr. Julie Uldam

Copenhagen Business School

Monday, 28.11., 2022
16:15-17:15, Room TBA

Abstract: Social media have been celebrated for their possibilities for providing activists with new possibilities for bypassing legacy media and circulating self-presentations. However, social media platforms do not exist in some sort of vacuum but are very much deeply embedded in a media ecology where coverage in legacy media is still key to reaching wider publics. I have previously argued that this means that activist input or criticism needs to come in spectacular packaging to gain visibility, and that spectacular packaging often entails damage – symbolic or material – or expression of anger, which leads to negative media coverage. Further, news logics are increasingly intertwined with algorithmic logics, and algorithmic logics privilege anger and the spectacular. However, little is known about how activists – reformist and radical – understand these logics. In this presentation, I present preliminary findings from a research project that examines activist understandings of news logics and algorithmic logics, and how these understandings influence their strategies for contention and collaboration.

Julie Uldam is Associate Professor at Copenhagen Business School. Her current research explores the role of digital media in societal challenges, including the climate crisis and democratic debate. She leads the project Imagining Digital Power and the Power of Digital Imagination in Business and Society Encounters. Julie was Chair of ECREA's Communication and Democracy section from 2012-2018. Her work has been published in international journals such as New Media & Society, Media, Culture & Society, International Journal of Communication, and Journal of Business Ethics.